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AUTHOR Sotirin, Patty
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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on methods of interweaving ethnography in undergraduate communication courses, based on the premise that ethnographic fieldwork facilitates students' awareness of the contexts of their own meaning-making practices. The basic approach in the paper is to ask students to reflect on basic concepts of organizational or interpersonal communication through their own field observations. The paper discusses the following sequence in teaching ethnography: (1) introduction to a cultural perspective; (2) introduction to fieldwork and fieldnotes; (3) discussions of confidentiality and informed consent; (4) processes of interpretation and analysis; and (5) options in writing a final report. (Contains 24 references. Attachments include a sample syllabus, a fieldwork and fieldnotes handout, and an informed consent sample form.) (EF)

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by Patty Sotirin

CS 510 211

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Bringing the Outside In: Ethnography In/Beyond the Classroom

Patty Sotirin, Michigan Technological University[1]

I draw upon my own teaching experiences, convictions, and commitments to reflect on the value of ethnographic exercises in the undergraduate classroom. I have introduced my students to ethnographic assumptions and practices in both the interpersonal and organizational communication courses. In both cases, I hope to muddle the distinctions between life outside the classroom and the experiences we construct together inside. In other words, I encourage students to "bring the outside in." I also encourage a different kind of muddling: a muddling of what we take for granted, the transparencies of everyday common sense. By "making the familiar strange" and reflecting on encounters with the "other as other," I try to encourage critique and the construction of what Gramsci called "good sense." In other words, I want this introduction to ethnographic perspectives to move in/beyond the conventional ways of classroom knowing and learning.

I should be clear from the outset about the limitations on the idea of ethnography that I affect in my classes. The methodological criteria for long-term immersion in a field of study are not practical in a one-term course (and I teach in a quarter system so there is even less potential immersion time). Further, I encourage students to stay close-to-home rather than to find an unfamiliar setting for their fieldwork. I'm bolstered in this by Lofland and Lofland's (1984) advice to "start where you are" in developing fieldwork projects. But it does mean that I must ask students to bracket their native understandings of the groups and settings they observe. This adds a difficult dimension in that the "outside" is already "in." I address this difficulty by emphasizing critical self-reflection

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and a guided process of revisiting their stories from the field by adopting different, perhaps initially missing or marginalized standpoints.

Rationale

I'll get to the syllabi and materials from the course momentarily but first, I want to review the conceptual bases for bringing ethnography into the classroom. My interpersonal course draws upon assumptions in the tradition of symbolic interactionism about the relational contexts in which meaning, action, self, other, and world are created, struggled over, and changed or maintained. According to John Stewart (1999), "Communication is the continuous, complex, collaborative process of verbal and nonverbal meaning-making through which we construct the worlds of meaning we inhabit" (21). I take seriously the idea of co-constructing and co-habiting worlds of meaning. In the most mundane interactions and everyday settings, people engage each other in complex negotiations and collaborations over who they are and can be, what matters and why, and what can and should be done. Ethnography focuses on those ongoing negotiations and collaborations. It is a way of learning about ourselves by participating with others in their worlds of meaning (Marcus and Fisher, 1986). What we make of our experiences can demonstrate both the limitations of our own ways of thinking and acting and the possibilities that we have heretofore ignored, neglected, marginalized, or denigrated. In other words, ethnographic fieldwork enhances the reflective quality of interpersonal meaning-making – our "awareness of being aware" (Stewart, 38). Bringing ethnography into the interpersonal communication course gives us the opportunity to facilitate students' awareness of the contexts of their own meaning-making practices.

In the organizational communication course, I try to respond to Linstead's (1996) pedagogical directions for management learning: "Develop a pedagogy which seeks to develop the manager as anthropologist, using ethnography as: a mode of apprehension

(becoming receptive to others and otherness, developing a negative capability to absorb rather than construct data); a means of learning and understanding (by actively seeking to take the perspectives of others and test those views); a process of self-critique (becoming aware of alternative knowledge and practices, and one's own role in the construction of truth)" (22). This is a pedagogical approach that enhances not just investigative skills but communicative sensitivities. Ethnography as a mode of apprehension, a means of learning and understanding, and a process of self-critique contributes to an ethics of organizational communication that engages otherness, respects diversity, and collaborates in alternative ways of being, thinking, and doing.

These might be lofty goals for a one semester course. But even a short introduction to ethnographic perspectives gives students an appreciation for alternative models of organizations – as and in cultures, as subcultural factions (Van Maanen and Barley, 1984), as story-telling systems (Boje, 1991), as interpretive mosaics (Trujillo, 1992), as a kaleidoscope of metaphors (Morgan, 1996), as lattices of dynamic sociohistorical tensions between creativity and constraint, domination and resistance, competition and connection, a logic of efficiency and a logic of caring and so on (cf. Eisenberg and Goodall, 1997; Tannen, 1994; Mumby and Putnam, 1992).

Even in programs where the push is to produce marketable students and the approach to organizational communication is corporatist, an introduction to ethnographic perspectives can be justified. A recent article in Fast Company on anthropologists hired by major corporations explained that the "holistic approach" of anthropology is critical to understanding the complexities of the contemporary corporate world – rather than seeing the organization in black-and-white, an ethnographic perspective can create "technicolor" understandings. More importantly, and supportive of my claim that teaching our students ethnographic perspectives contributes to an ethics of organizational communication, the Fast Company article closes with an observation from an anthropologist employed by the

Texas Commerce Bank, that this valuation of ethnographic insights by major corporations "reflects a general movement to democratize business" because the managerial view is no longer privileged and the ebb and flow of organizational change and continuity is seen from the bottom up. On a more personally practical level, giving students some understanding of processes of sense-making embedded in cultural contexts can improve their abilities to get along in organizations by staying attuned to the patterns of meanings and feelings in everyday cultural performances (Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1984).

Bringing the Outside In

Operationalizing the commitments I've reviewed above isn't easy. Much of the work of reframing students' observations of everyday people and activities must be done through selected readings, in classroom discussions, and in responses to their writing. I'll outline the process I've been using to give a feel for what is involved. A sample syllabus is attached to this paper (attachment #1).

Readings

I am expected to teach survey courses in organizational and interpersonal communication. In most cases, these are the only exposure my students will have to these areas. My approach is to ask students to reflect on the basic concepts of organizational or interpersonal communication through their own field observations. To this end, I adopt a standard textbook in the area and ask students to direct their field observations to the topics covered in the textbook chapters. For example, in the interpersonal course, I have asked students to make observations in their chosen setting of the behaviors discussed in each chapter of Wood (1999), Interpersonal Communication: Everyday Encounters (2nd ed.). Some textbooks are more amenable to an ethnographic approach than others. Notable among standard organizational communication textbooks are Pepper (1995), Communicating in Organizations: A Cultural Approach and

Eisenberg and Goodall (1997). Organizational Communication: Balancing Creativity and Constraint (2nd ed.).

Along with the textbook, I assign additional readings from texts about ethnographic processes. My supplementary reading list includes some or all of the following:

Agar, M.H. (1986). Excerpt on the holistic fallacy and etic/emic issues in Speaking of Ethnography (pp. 40-48). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Anderson, R. and Killenberg, F.M. (1999). Chapter 4, "Skillful Questioning," in Interviewing (pp. 80-119). London: Mayfield.

Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I., and Shaw, L.L. (1995). Excerpts from Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes. University of Chicago Press.

Lindlof, T.R. (1995). "Field Notes" in Qualitative Communication Research Methods (pp. 200-208). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lofland, J. and Lofland, L.H. (1984). Chapter 5: Logging data in Analyzing Social Settings: A guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Spradley, J.P. (1979). Excerpts from Chapter 3 in The Ethnographic Interview. NY: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Van Maanen, J. (1988). Excerpts from Chapter 3: Realist Tales; Chapter 4: Confessional Tales; and Chapter 5, Impressionist Tales in Tales in Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography. University of Chicago Press.

In Class/Out of Class

I introduce students to an ethnographic perspective in the following sequence: introduction to a cultural perspective, introduction to fieldwork and fieldnotes, discussions of confidentiality and informed consent, processes of interpretation and analysis, and options in writing a final report. They learn this perspective in class and out

of class; that is, their experiences of fieldwork and their reflections on these experiences are an integral part of the learning process and perhaps, teach them better than I do.

Introduction to a cultural perspective

I distinguish between an objective and subjective approach to organizational culture research, advocating the subjective approach in which the student is the "instrument of research." I discuss Peters and Waterman's themes from In Search of Excellence (1983) to describe the objective approach and show excerpts from the PBS video about the book's excellent companies. The video provides a segway into the subjective approach because it allows me to point out cultural performances and the creation and use of meanings. The introductions in Pepper, Chapters 2 and 3 (cited above) and in whatever textbook we are using provide background in an interpretive cultural approach.

In addition, I direct students to a website I developed as part of a shopping ethnography project. The website has examples of student fieldnotes and a final paper. The rationale for the course emphasized the everyday meaning making that organizes our experiences of organizations and communities: "Corporate organizations are integral to our lives; some say that corporate organizations have infiltrated even the most private aspects of our lives. We will study organizations as communicative entities – made and maintained through a variety of communicative forms and practices. To begin, we will study how organizations are constructed by communication and what organizations produce through communication. Then we will explore the everyday operations of communication in and by organizations through a mini-ethnography. We'll connect with other clases in other parts of the country to study shopping – the production and consumption of organizational communications (some would say the consumption of organizations) materialized in products, services, and images."

Introduction to Fieldwork and Fieldnotes

The commitments of ethnography are quite antithetical to students majoring in technical fields like chemical engineering or forestry. These are the majority of students in my classes. So I spend several class sessions discussing the concepts and techniques of "being the research instrument." My handout on Fieldwork and Fieldnotes (attachment #2) begins with various descriptions of the ethnographic project and details what I will hold students responsible for in the course of their own field observations. Specifically, I ask students to turn in a field log, their actual notes from the field (scratchings or headnotes included), their written fieldnotes which I call field narratives to emphasize the interpetive processes they are already engaged in when writing ostensible descriptions, transcriptions of their field interviews, a preliminary sketch or conceptual mapping of their interpretive analysis, and a final "tale" based on their observations and interpretations. In preparation for their own work, we do a preliminary field outing. Sometimes we all go to the student union on campus and different groups of students go to various locations to take notes. Then we reconvene and share our observations. Or I ask students to do an "Indiana Jones Organizational Culture Scavenger Hunt," explaining that the name of the exercise reflects my unease with the idea that we can carry out the meanings of particular subcultural settings. Or I ask students to take notes in class of the class (these are interesting and sometimes uncomfortable pictures of my teaching and students' responses!). In discussing their notes and observations, I try to preempt interpretations of motives and attitudes and concentrate instead on rich descriptions.

The problem of embedded assumptions and the need to "bracket" familiar meanings is particularly critical because I ask students to do their fieldwork in a site where they are participants. So I do preliminary exercises that sensitize students to the tendency to impose meanings on their observations and to overlook the obvious as having

little significance. One such exercise involves watching a video of Japanese high school baseball. This puts a familiar activity into an unfamiliar setting and introduces different cultural values and practices. I ask the students to discuss how their expectations of baseball create a sense of familiarity that can override the strangeness of the cultural setting, hence imposing a comfortable sensibility about what is going on rather than engaging the otherness of the video. Or we take an exercise discussed in Senge's Learning Organization in which I tell students to arm-wrestle each other with the goal of getting the other person's arm down to the table the most number of times. They do this under the assumption that they must beat the other person – competition – and I point out after a brief time that they would achieve their goal more effectively if they cooperated. But cultural assumptions get in the way and they never consider anything but a competitive approach. In these exercises, I try to illustrate how students must bracket their commonsense assumptions about the meanings and feelings they observe.

Finally, I introduce students to techniques of questioning in the field. Asking questions and listening are critical communicative tools for ethnographic research. I ask students to do at least one interview of a key informant and to tape-record and transcribe that interview. This happens late in their fieldwork or can be a return trip to the site in order to corroborate an interpretation or follow up on a puzzlement.

Confidentiality and Informed Consent

I ask students early on in the class to identify a field site for their observations. This should be a site where students have easy access and so they are typically full participants in this site. This compromises their role as researchers, of course, but in a short course (I teach on a quarter system), I hope to minimize access and permission issues. Early in the course, I send a blanket request to our Human Subjects Committee, asking for permission to conduct field observations as a class. During class, I introduce students to the Human Subjects Consent form and ask that they have key informants fill

out a form (attachment #3). We discuss the ethical dilemmas of confidentiality in fieldwork and the ultimate betrayals of ethnographic writing. At times, this involves us in issues of representation, mis-representation, and the privileging of researcher understandings. Typically, I couch these in terms of point-of-observation concerns about partial understandings, multiple interpretions, and the boundaries that people in the setting observe, for example, boundaries of gender, age, or status.

Processes of Interpretation and Analysis

Once students have logged a certain amount of time in the field, I meet one-on-one with them to discuss their observations and begin to sort out directions for their final reports. The difficulty is to distinguish between levels of interpretation: the everyday interpretations that infuse artefacts and behaviors with meaning and the reflective interpretations that seek the sense-making relations among inferred meanings, values, and feelings. In this meeting, I ask about the cultural behaviors and artefacts of the site and what meanings the participants seem to use or negotiate. We review their field experiences so that they can bracket one event or performance to analyze the constitutive relations of meaning. Sometimes the particular focus for analysis emerges as we talk. Sometimes they already know what they want to look at when they come to see me – something that they have already begun to engage reflectively. Sometimes they struggle to come up with something to say beyond the obvious. I'm sympathetic to the difficulties of bracketing the familiar; as we talk through their fieldnotes, I ask them questions meant to help them reflect on the immediate sensicalness of their experiences. This is perhaps the most difficult, rewarding, and discouraging part of incorporating these methods into undergraduate classes. There are times when students suddenly "see" their own understandings differently and that's exciting. There are times when they try really hard but are never able to bracket familiar interpretations. And there are times, perhaps the

most disappointing, when I feel a real break-through as we talk in my office but the final paper remains a discussion of the obvious-as-obvious.

During this office visit, I also discuss what it means to support their interpretive analyses with examples from their fieldnotes. Schein (1984), Bantz (1993), Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein (1997) offer models of interpretive analyses drawn on fieldnotes suitable for student projects. Back in class, I ask everyone to read and discuss a model of cultural analysis to give students a feel for what they are doing. For example, we read a condensed version of Trujillo's (1985) "Organizational Communication as Cultural Performance: Some Managerial Considerations" or "Interpreting (the Work and the Talk of) Baseball: Perspectives on Ballpark Culture" (1992) by the same author. I also invite other researchers involved in ethnographic studies – typically grad students and an occasional faculty member – to visit the class and describe their experiences and their interpretive processes.

Occasionally during the last third of the quarter once students are actively working on their final analyses, I invite them to share their work in small groups. This offers another form of interpretive corroboration and alerts them to any missing details in their descriptions. However, there is a danger to these small group interactions and that is the temptation to affirm the familiar. It is not unusual for students to share their field descriptions with their group and have everyone concur on the obviousness of "what it all means." Nor is it uncommon for groups to discourage members from "over-analyzing" the familiar. These are dangers that keep me vigilant as I ask each group for feedback on what they have discussed.

Writing Up the Final Report

The final report on their fieldwork is a "tale" told from one of Van Maanen's (1988) types of ethnographic tales: realist, impressionist, or confessional. I encourage them to approach this writing assignment as an opportunity in narrative writing. In

addition, I ask students to answer a question I pose that has to do with the content of the course. For example, in the organizational communication course, I have asked students to use supporting materials from their fieldnotes and interviews to answer the question, "What is "good" communication for the members of this organizational subculture?" I encourage them to address differing interpretations of "good" especially those that do not conform to what they consider to be the majority view in this setting and to include at least one example of a negotiation among members over what "good" communication is or how it should be assessed. I also ask them to consider what "good" means from the perspective of the various theories of organizations we have studied and to discuss the sense of "good" from their observed site in terms of these models.

Conclusion

Bringing the outside/in by teaching students skills of ethnographic inquiry is a difficult task. Students are often uncomfortable with this kind of learning and resist engaging their experiences and fieldnotes at a reflective level. Nonetheless, these are exercises in critical reflectiveness that alert students to their own meaning-making practices and encourage them to question the taken-for-granted limits of those practices. By bringing life outside the classroom in as the substance of inquiry, we offer our students an alternative mode of understanding, a way to understand their own immersion in meaning-making and marginalizing and we make good on an ethical commitment to engage otherness, respect diversity, and collaborate in alternative ways of being, thinking, and doing.

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Attachment #1: Sample syllabus

HU323, **Organizational Communication**

P. Sotirin, Walker 345. Office hours: Noon-1:00MWF

Texts: Eisenberg & Goodall, Organizational Communication, 2nd ed. and readings on library reserve

Description: What is "good" organizational communication? How does communication "work" in organizations and when and for whom is it "good"? These questions are answered in different ways in the various models of organization. This course introduces you to the models and their attendant assumptions about organizational communication as well as to research in organizational communication on such topics as socialization, decision-making, social support, and technologies. The course emphasizes a cultural perspective: organizations as cultures in themselves and organizations as cultural phenomena. You will learn how to use this perspective to study what is enacted as "good" communication in your own workplaces. The goal of the course is to study how common assumptions and habits of communication organize our work lives.

Objectives:

1. Introduce the cultural perspective and research methods.
2. Introduce dominant models of organization and organizational communication.
3. Overview research topics in organizational communication

Assignments:

10 hours of fieldwork and 1 interview (20-30 minutes)
Typed fieldnotes, log, and interview transcript
Final cultural "tale"
2 exams

Requirements: I welcome your constructive input on the development of this course; the schedule I propose here is flexible and we may alter it depending on circumstances and our collective interests. I encourage you to see me regarding any particular aspect of your involvement in the course. In addition, accommodations will be made for particular needs in accord with university policy:

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head, or the Affirmative Action office (3310).

I ask that you do the assigned readings for each class session and participate in discussions and exercises. You must complete all the assignments for a final grade or make arrangements with me to complete missing assignments. I expect careful documentation of any sources, especially electronic sources.

Schedule (M-W-F, 10-week quarters)

Week 01
Mon Introduction
Wed Chap. 1 & 2, Changing nature of work
Fri Chap. 3, Founding perspectives

Week 02
Mon Chap. 4, Systems
Wed Chap. 5, Culture
Fri Introduction to fieldwork (reserve readings)

Week 03
Mon Fieldnotes (reserve readings)
Wed Informed consent
Fri Chap. 6, Critical perspectives

Week 04
Mon Chap. 7, Postmodernism
Wed Exam #1
Fri Fieldwork (reserve readings); first field narratives due

Week 05
Mon Interviewing (reserve readings)
Wed Examples: the ballpark (reserve readings)
Fri Chap. 8, Personal experiences at work

Week 06
Mon Chap. 9, Relational communication at work
Wed Chap. 10, Groupwork
Fri Chap. 11, Image management; second field narratives due

Week 07
Mon Exam #2
Wed Ethical issues (reserve readings)
Fri Class discussion: how's your fieldwork going?

Week 08
Mon Interpretive analysis (reserve readings); Third field narratives due
Wed No class: sign up for individual meetings with me
Fri Realist tales (reserve readings)

Week 09
Mon Impressionist tales (reserve readings)
Wed Critical tales (reserve readings); interview transcripts due
Fri Class discussion: doing interpretive analysis

Week 10
Mon Informal class reports
Wed Informal class reports
Fri Concluding comments & course evaluation

Attachment #2
Fieldwork and Fieldnotes

You will need to keep up with the following:

4. **Field log** – record times, dates, and places of your fieldwork
5. **Field notes** – record your observations in a notebook or a tape-recorder
6. **Written field narratives** – as soon as possible, write a narrative of what you experienced. Describe people, places, events, and language as completely as possible.
7. **Field interviews** – identify key informants and conduct conversational interviews. Tape-record these and turn in the transcriptions.
8. **Interpretive analysis** – begin to record the path of your analysis. Make notes on the terms, concepts, actions, or objects that strike you as important to people in the setting; trace the relationships among these elements. Continue to refine your mapping of these elements and don't hesitate to change your analyses as you continue to make observations.
9. **Tales** – write a self-enclosed story drawn on your field observations and your interpretive analysis.

Van Maanen (1988): "Ethnographies are portraits of diversity in an increasingly homogeneous world. They display the intricate ways individuals and groups understand, accommodate and resist a presumably shared order" (xiii-xiv). "Culture is not itself visible, but is made visible only through its representation" (3).

Agar (1986): "Ethnographies emerge out of a relationship among the traditions of ethnographer, group, and intended audience. Ethnography is at its core a process of 'mediating frames of meaning.' The nature of a particular mediation will depend on the nature of the traditions that are in contact during the fieldwork" (19).

In ethnographic research, **you are the research instrument**. Start with your relation to the people you observe, your project, and your audiences. As you write your fieldnotes as well as your papers, make your own biases and assumptions clear. Situate yourself autobiographically and intellectually. Keep up with these reflections as you proceed through the project to monitor the ways they enter into your observations, interpretations, and writing.

Participant observation: By experiencing the everyday world (of the natives) the participant observer allows the categories of understanding to emerge from the actual

forms of participation, rather than taking preconceived categories into the study and seeking corroboration in the observations. (Jorgensen, 1989).

Gain as many different perspectives as possible – ask around, experience in different positions. READ Trujillo (1992): baseball ballparks as business, drama, and community

Don't decide for yourself what is important or what interpretations make most sense – observe and ask. Beware of imposing your own assumptions.

Schein's (1985) advice on doing organizational culture analyses (from Pepper, Chapter 3):

1. Gain access and note what surprises you
2. Observe and check
3. Find an insider willing to explain and capable of explaining to you
4. Reveal what you find puzzling
5. With the insider try to account for your perceptions
6. Form hypotheses
7. Check and consolidate
8. Seek to the level of assumptions
9. Revise earlier findings to suit later ones
10. Formally report

Taking fieldnotes (from Emerson, Frentz, and Shaw, reserve reading #3)

1. Jot notes in the field
   Decide when, where, and how you can do this
   Adapt to circumstances and relationships
2. Be careful to record initial impressions, then surprises or key events
3. Make note of your own reactions and emotions but don't use these to judge
4. Write notes to jog your memory about what it is like to be there
   a. details of scenes and interactions
   b. avoid generalizations and stereotypes
   c. jot down concrete details rather than generalized impressions
   d. make note of expressions, gestures, and movements as well as words
   e. don't attribute motives to the behaviors you observe
   f. note emotional displays but don't explain them
   g. note feelings you have about what seems to be important even if you don't know what these mean

What to look for/at:

1. **Territory**: how are work areas decorated? How are non-work areas designated? How do people protect their "own" space?
   Architecture: how is space arranged? Who gets more or less?

2. **Stuff**: who has what? What are private and what are communal possessions?
   Furniture: what kinds and how is it arranged?
   Visual signs: describe any graphics: what, where, who looks at it, who put it there?
   Technology: who is using what for what purposes? How are access and use controlled and by whom?

3. **People**: what categories do you observe? What flows of people do you observe?
   Dress: what are the consistencies and variations? What patterns do you observe?
   Bodies: how are different bodies accommodated? Or not? What nonverbal behaviors do you observe?
   Authority: who has it? Who is subjected to it and when/why? What interactions indicate differences in authority? Challenges to authority (subtle or not)?
   Affection: how, where, and between whom is it expressed? How often and intensely?

4. **Talk**: what is said and what vocabularies are in use?
   Conversation: who talks to whom about what? What kinds of talk take place where, when, and with whom? How formal or informal?
   Vocabularies: what technical or colloquial words ar distinct to this group? What words and names are used frequently?

Doing interpretive analysis: the OCC method (from Bantz, 1993)

1. Collect artefacts and interactions (use the above categories)
2. Analyze 4 components:
   a. Vocabulary (language)
   b. Themes (repeated topics or routines)
   c. Temporality (frequencies or rhythms and pace of everyday activities)
   d. Architecture or structures)
3. Analyze symbolic forms:
   e. metaphors
   f. stories
   g. jokes

4. infer organizational expectations:
   a. norms or rules
   b. roles
   c. motives (publicly stated reasons)
   d. agenda (expectations about how time is structured)
   e. style
5. Make connections:
   a. constructs: what issues are of most concern, what matters to people?
   b. Relations among constructs: connections, contrasts, contradictions?

Attachment #3

INFORMED CONSENT FOR OBSERVATIONAL STUDY
OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

I understand that _____, a student at Michigan Technological University, is conducting observations as part of a class assignment for HU323 Organizational Communication. The purpose of the observations is to identify and interpret the everyday activities of organizational members. I understand that my activities will be observed and that notes will be taken on these activities. The student will analyze these notes and submit a final paper to the instructor.

My participation is completely voluntary. I will not receive any financial reward or university credit for my part in this study. I understand that the notes and final papers from this study will be for class use only and will not be published or otherwise disseminated. No real names will be used in the final papers to preserve anonymity.

I may stop the observations of any particular interaction or event without penalty. I have the right to withdraw from this project at any time without penalty.

_____

Signature of partipant and date (please print and then write your signature)

_____

Signature of researcher and date

_____

Signature of instructor and date